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"nourishment to every branch of man's nature, emotional and moral, rational and "spiritual."

In his endeavor to realise the object which he has set himself, Mr. Mead has traversed a vast field. Beginning with the Greece of 600 B. C., with its philosophies and mysticisms, with Egypt and its mysticism, with the systems of Philo, with the thought and civilisation of Jewry and Alexander, he considers general and Gnostic Christianity, the various sects of the Ebionites, the Essenes, the Ophites, etc., the individual doctrines and systems of Dositheus, Simon Magus, Menander, Saturninus, Marcion, Valentinus, etc., etc. We have then many pages devoted to traces of the Gnosis in the non-Canonical acts, to the Greek original works in Coptic translations, the Pistis Sophia, the book of the great Logos, the Akhmim Code, etc.; and finally, there is a bibliography. In fine, we have in this volume "a bird's eye view of the whole field of early Gnosticism," written for the general reader in a style and method requiring no knowledge of the ancient tongues, —all considered from a special point of view. It is designed as a pioneer sketch only, and the author hopes at some time in the future to be able to publish a large work comprising a number of volumes to be called *Round the Cradle of Christianity*.

μ.

SCIENTIFIC ROMANCES. By *C. H. Hinton, B. A.* London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., Ltd., Paternoster Square. Vol. I., 1886. Pages, 229. Price, 6s. Vol. II., 1896. Pages, 177. Price, 6s.

Mr. C. H. Hinton has kindly sent us his *Scientific Romances*,<sup>1</sup> in two volumes, published several years ago, and calls our special attention to his essays on the Fourth Dimension. We believe that space has infinite directions and that the assumption of three dimensions so called are nothing but the most economical way of determining space relations.<sup>1</sup> Systems of 4, 5, or  $n$  dimensions are abstractly conceivable, and their conception is useful to mathematicians as a generalisation which introduces a higher and more comprehensive point of view. There are difficulties and intricacies connected with the mathematical notion of a space system that presents a greater manifoldness than three dimensions, but for that reason the generalisation is legitimate for its purpose and within its limits as a generalisation, but if the idea of spaces of more than three dimensions is taken seriously, if they are thought as representing a reality, we venture into dreamland,—and it is a domain the possible form of which we cannot even conceive in our imagination.

Mr. Hinton's position may be characterised by the concluding paragraph of his essay on many dimensions. He says:

"There are two sides of religion,—the inductive and the deductive. To the realm of deduction belongs theology, with its central assertion and its manifold consequences. But inductive religion consists in grasping, amidst the puzzling

<sup>1</sup> See *Primer of Philosophy*, pp. 99–103. Compare *Fundamental Problems*, pp. 61–73.

facts of life, those greater existences in which the individual organisations are bound up, and which they serve, passing, as in every science, from the details to the whole. And the connecting link between materialism and the conduct of life, lies in the doctrine of the limited nature of our present space perceptions. For, with the elevation of our notion of space to its true place, the antagonism between our present materialistic and our present idealistic views of life falls away."

As to space he says :

"When in our space we have explained all that we can explain by the supposition of particles moving in our space, we shall find that there is a residuum, and this residuum will be explained by the four-dimensional movements of the minutest particles. The large movements are simply movements in three-dimensional space, but to explain the residual phenomenon a higher kind of space will be requisite."

And in another place he argues :

"If a fourth dimension exists, there are two possible alternatives.

"One is, that there being four dimensions, we have a three-dimensional existence only. The other is that we really have a four-dimensional existence, but are not conscious of it. If we are in three dimensions only, while there are really four dimensions, then we must be relatively to those beings who exist in four dimensions, as lines and planes are in relation to us. That is, we must be mere abstractions. In this case we must exist only in the mind of the being that conceives us, and our experience must be merely the thoughts of his mind,—a result which has apparently been arrived at, on independent grounds, by an idealist philosopher.

"The other alternative is, that we have a four-dimensional existence. In this case our proportions in it must be infinitely minute, or we should be conscious of them. If such be the case, it would probably be in the ultimate particles of matter that we should discover the fourth dimension, for in the ultimate particles the sizes in the three dimensions are very minute, and the magnitudes in all four dimensions would be comparable.

"The preceding two alternative suppositions are based on the hypothesis of the reality of four-dimensional existence, and must be conceived to hold good only on that hypothesis.

"It is somewhat curious to notice that we can thus conceive of an existence relative to which that which we enjoy must exist as a mere abstraction." P. C.

TALKS ON CIVICS. By *Henry Holt*. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1901. Pages, xxvi, 493. Price, \$1.25.

Mr. Henry Holt has attempted in the present dialogues to rescue the method of Socrates and Plato from the noxious desuetude into which it has fallen and to apply it to the resolution of the practical problems of politics and government now presenting themselves to the young voters of the United States. The aim he has set himself is "to develop in young people the character of mind which is proof against political quackery." "Of all our hard-bought institutions," he says, "there